

SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE NEWS FOR SUNDAY 18 June 2017

Good morning and welcome to the weekly news bulletin of the South African Radio League read by [your name, call sign and QTH]

You may tune in to the South African Radio League news bulletin on Sunday mornings, at 08:15 Local Time in Afrikaans and at 08:30 Local Time in English, on HF as well as on many VHF and UHF repeaters around the country. Echolink listeners may connect to ZS0JPL for a relay. A podcast is available from the League's web site.

This audio bulletin may be downloaded from the League's website at www.sarl.org.za where you will find this as well as previous bulletins in text format under the news link on the left-hand side of the web page. While you are there, you may sign up to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

In the news, today:

SARL FUND FOR DISASTER VICTIMS

SARL TOP BAND QSO PARTY

and

ZS3 SPRINT RESULTS

Stay tuned for more information on these and other interesting news items.

SARL FUND FOR DISASTER VICTIMS

SARL President Nico, ZS6QL, said in a news flash dated 14 June 2017, "I am pleased to announce that Council has decided, on short notice, to establish an independent General Disaster Trust Fund to assist fellow radio amateurs who have suffered because of natural disasters. In a nutshell, this general disaster fund will be administered by independent trustees and not by Council. The trustees, in no specific order are, Gary Immelman, ZS6YI, Louw Erasmus, ZS6LME, Cliff Smyth, ZS6BOX, and Rassie Erasmus, ZS1YT. Trustees will have absolute discretion how funds for the current and for future major relief situations are to be utilised.

This is an open and honest initiative from Council to establish a fund for the current and for future major relief situations to assist in extra ordinary circumstances and not ordinary charity circumstances. Contributions can be paid into Erasmus Incorporated Trust Account at ABSA Bank with account number 404 947 8830. Please use your callsign as reference, or should you prefer to contribute anonymously use the word "Disaster Fund" as reference".

The thread "SARL Fund for Disaster Victims" on the Forum will be used for reporting progress, acknowledge payments and for announcements. Please note that no general chatter will be allowed, especially negative remarks or criticism of any kind. Many thanks for your generous support and understanding with this initiative.

SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE TOP BAND QSO PARTY

This is a fun activity to promote contacts on 160 metres between radio amateurs in Southern African countries and to encourage radio amateurs to apply for the South African Radio League Top Band Award. The QSO Party takes place from 00:00 UTC on Thursday 22 June to 00:00 UTC on Monday 26 June with CW activity between 1 810 - 1 838 kHz and phone activity between 1 840 - 2 000 kHz. The exchange is a RS or RST report and provincial or country abbreviation. The QSO Party is open to all licensed amateurs that have access to the 160 metre band.

Each station can be worked once per mode i.e. once on Phone and again with CW. Each contact will count three (3) points. Bonus Points: Each South African call area and each DXCC country worked will be awarded with five (5) additional bonus points. Total Score = (Total QSO points) + (Bonus points). Logs, in ADIF, Cabrillo or MS Excel format and labelled "your call sign Top Band," shall be submitted by 3 July 2017 by e-mail to contest@sarl.org.za.

You are listening to a news Bulletin of the South African Amateur Radio League.

FM BROADCASTING STATIONS AS VHF BEACONS

In the USA, they have often observed strong signals from distant FM broadcasting stations during Sporadic-E openings. This is also possible in South Africa during December and January months, which is our Sporadic-E season. Just keep an eye on those clear spaces on the FM band where distant FM stations are hiding in the noise. FM stations could also act as VHF beacons on Tropospheric modes, as well as indicators of meteor scatter and lightning scatter.

Mike, ZS2FM at Port Elizabeth studied the propagation from an East London FM station for about a year over a distance of 250 km, while using a four element Yagi in the attic connected to a domestic FM receiver. The FM station was audible daily via Tropo Scatter, but with very deep QSB cycles, and yielded a peak signal of about 2 microvolts as measured at the antenna terminals of the receiver. During Tropo Enhancement, where the temperature inversion was below 450 metres, the signal increased to around 20 microvolts with full quieting and no QSB. When a cold front approached from the west it created a Tropo Duct ahead of it, which is a temperature inversion at an altitude of 500 metres or higher. This produced a super FM signal that peaked above 50 microvolts, and the maximum that could be measured at the receiver. So, give it a try.

ZS3 SPRINT RESULTS

After extensive scrutinising of the logs received, the results of the ZS3 Sprint have been released. The ZS3 Sprint was well supported on 21 May 2017. We received 25 logs (2 less than in 2016) from which three of them were used as controlled logs. The results are as follows for the hour on the air:

1st Woody Collett, ZS3WL - 123 points 2nd Deon Fraser, ZS5DCF - 92 points
3rd Theo Bosch, ZS3TBS - 82 points

The Northern Cape Amateur Radio Club thanks everybody that took part and sent in their logs.

HOLE IN THE SUN'S ATMOSPHERE

A large hole has opened in the sun's atmosphere and it is turning toward Earth. NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory is monitoring the structure. This is a coronal hole (CH) - a region where the sun's magnetic field peels back and allows solar wind to escape. A fast-moving stream of solar wind from this coronal hole is expected to arrive on 16 June, possibly sparking G1-class geomagnetic storms. High-latitude sky watchers should be alert for auroras, especially in the southern hemisphere where autumn darkness favours visibility. Forecasters note that this stream is unusually fast with wind speeds as high as 700 km/s. Moreover, it is threaded with "negative polarity" (south-pointing) magnetic fields. Such fields do a good job connecting to Earth's magnetosphere and energizing geomagnetic storms.

PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to be at low levels. There is currently no threat of strong solar flares. If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around one. The 17 to 30 metre bands will provide lots of DX fun. 60 metres will be the best band for local contacts. Please visit the website spaceweather.sansa.org.za for further information.

Finally, a Diary of some upcoming events:

21 June the Winter Solstice 22 to 26 June the SARL Top Band QSO Party
1 July the SARL Newbie QSO Party 2 July the ZS5 Sprint 8 - 9 July the IARU HF Championships 15 July the RADAR Challenge and the ZS2 Sprint

To conclude our bulletin a quick overview of our main news items

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This brings us to the end of this bulletin.

Clubs and individuals are invited to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners, if possible, in both English and Afrikaans, by following the news inbox link on the South African Radio League web page. News items for inclusion in the bulletin should reach the news team no later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

You are welcome to join us every Sunday morning for the weekly amateur radio program, 'Amateur Radio Today' at 10:00 Central African Time. The program can be heard on VHF and UHF repeaters countrywide and on 7 082 kHz lower side-band and on 7 205 kHz and 17 760 kHz AM. There is also a podcast

available from Dick Stratford, ZS6RO. A rebroadcast can be heard on Monday evenings at 18:30 Central African Time on 3 230 kHz AM.

We welcome your signal reports, comments and suggestions; please send these by e-mail to artoday@sarl.org.za. Sentech sponsors the radio transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a news bulletin compiled by Andy Cairns, ZS6ADY, edited by Dick Stratford, ZS6RO, and read by

From the news team, best wishes for the week ahead.

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